

What to do with excess citrus



Any good food gardener will know how to utilise excess produce and this is the season of citrus. It has arrived in abundance over the last few months, and everyone seems to be getting rid of lemons, oranges and limes. There are little bags and baskets and buckets of lemons and limes sitting on the front fences of many homes on our walk to school. Our clinic has also become a lovely drop off point for client's excess fruits. As such we have been using the fruits and peel in lots of interesting ways this Winter.

Traditionally any excess produce was preserved to minimise waste and optimise food sources. At our clinic we have been experimenting and cooking up some traditional citrus recipes to create cleaning products and edible items from the vitamin C rich fruit, bioflavanoid rich pith, zest and peel.

Save the zest: thinly peel or grate the peel avoiding the bitter white pith. Use Zest fresh or dry for later use. Zest can be air dried on a baking tray in the sun or a brown paper bag hung up near a heater. Store dried zest in an airtight jar. Use in any recipe asking for zest or in a DIY bathroom cleaner.

Dry the peels: After peeling an orange or lemon keep the peel and dry them via 'zest methods' or in a low oven or dehydrator. Store in a jar. These can be used to make a citrus peel chai, to add to cakes, making bath and body products, steeped for 2 weeks in vinegar to create citrus peel cleaner, or used as fire lighters.

Freeze the juice: can be kept in the fridge for up to 2 weeks or in the freezer in icecube trays or iceypole holders, ready for summer!

Preserve the fruit: So you can eat it all year round by making marmalade, preserved lemons for curries or making a DIY orange extract.

Dehydrate slices: Dry the thinly sliced citrus in a low oven or dehydrator and once completely dry store in a jar. You can rehydrate sliced fruit to use in recipes or use dried in chai, baking, homemade potpourri, a garland decoration above a window or grind to make your own vitamin C powder, which can be mixed in hot water and drunk when feeling run down. [Check out the recipe here](#)